

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 4, 2014

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
Secretary  
Department of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

Your recent budget proposal to reduce the subsidy provided to our U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) commissaries by \$1 billion in three years is an unacceptable cut that we urge you to rescind. Reducing the current subsidy would have a lasting impact on many of our young military families, who rely heavily on the benefits and convenience that these commissaries provide.

On November 20, 2013, Joseph Jeu, the Director and CEO of the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) stated in his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee Military Personnel Subcommittee that DoD commissaries save patrons more than 30 percent from supermarket prices with an average annual savings for a family of four of almost \$4500.

Reducing the current subsidy will reduce these earned benefits for our service members. Instead of enacting this ill-conceived policy that has already raised concerns and opposition from military families and Veterans Service Organizations, we must work together to target the wasteful spending at DoD that is crowding out the funds needed to support the benefits provided by our DoD commissaries.

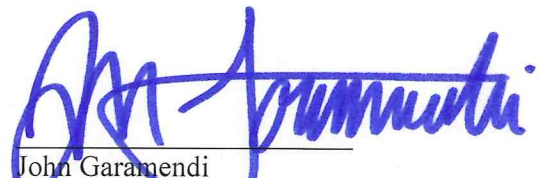
It is unacceptable that DoD continues to support wasteful spending, such as the more than \$80,000 that was spent on new televisions for detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the \$34 million for a U.S. military headquarters in Afghanistan, which the DoD has no plans to use. Further, a June 27, 2013 DoD memo stated "our available funding balances remain large in all appropriations - too large to spend." DoD must look towards other avenues of cost savings and not target the essential benefits of our military families.


From TRICARE to tuition assistance and now benefits provided by our military commissaries, DoD continues to propose budget cuts to programs that directly impact the earned benefits promised to the men and women of our Armed Forces. We urge DoD to reject any plans to reduce the subsidy for our nation's commissaries and work with Congress to effectively reform and reduce wasteful and unnecessary spending at DoD.

Sincerely,

  
Tim Griffin  
Member of Congress

  
Ed Whitfield  
Member of Congress

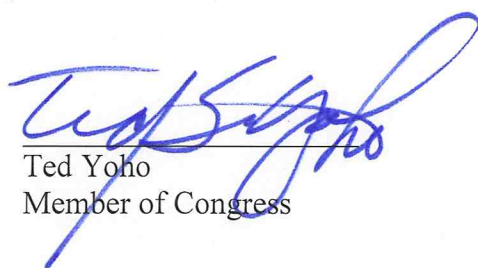
  
John Garamendi  
Member of Congress

  
Rick Crawford  
Member of Congress


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Ted Yoho  
Member of Congress



Jon Runyan  
Member of Congress